



## Blame

When the screen at the front of worship works, people rarely notice. They sing the songs, they look at the pictures and their brains are relaxed. If the image, however, is incorrect, their neck muscles almost always overwhelm them. They tighten, swivel their heads and often stare menacingly into the balcony.

I can tell you that the tech team in the balcony is stressed enough. The delicate dance they do each week to get us through a worship service is punctuated by tension. Before the service starts they are juggling numerous balls. The lighting in the room. The sound in the room. The image on the screen. Another group of people are tending to the TV ministry: perched at the cameras, managing the sound, putting words on the feed, and selecting the right camera angle to show. Everyone wants to do a good job. No one wants the neck swivel coming their way.

Last Sunday, in the early service, the computer obediently sent the words to the screen and we sang the songs of Christmas with joy. I preached through my sermon and the clicker responded to the pressure in my fingers and the slides changed behind me and in the balcony. In the second service, as we began to sing we could tell it was going to be trouble. The words did not appear. Necks swiveled.

If you could have been in the balcony this is what you would have seen. The main computer stopped working. The beach ball of death just spun. The only choice was to shut the computer down and try to reboot, but this would take too much time. Instead, they decided to grab a computer which we use in the TV ministry and which also has the programs we use to control the LED screens. They relocated that computer, started the projection program and loaded my sermon from the server. They unhooked the struggling computer and wired in the substitute computer.

By the time I got to my sermon, it was ready. I pushed the button on my clicker and nothing seemed to happen and then the back screen changed. OK, I thought to myself, it's working, but very slowly. I need to push the button a second or two before I need it to change. I struggled in my sermon delivery, it was distracting. I did not understand till later what was happening. I was controlling the screen on the stage, which is behind me and I cannot see. Logan was controlling the screen in the balcony. The substitute computer was only set up to control the front screen. He was waiting for me to advance the slide and then he was pushing the button to control the back screen which was being controlled by the rebooted but unreliable primary computer. It was chaos. The team in the balcony did not show it. They were calm and deliberate. They focused on solving the problems with the tools that they had. I'm so proud of them. Most people would have withered under the pressure. Our team did the opposite, they flourished.

We got through Sunday morning and then had to face Sunday night. The *Gloria* concert was intertwined with images selected for the screen to help tell the musical story. Lots of time had gone into developing beautiful and compelling videos to accentuate the choir and the orchestra. The tech team started to work immediately. They solved the two screen problem of the substitute computer, they copied and reloaded the *Gloria* program. After an hour of work the computers were ready for the performance. The team stepped away for about 30 minutes for lunch and then were back at their posts. They had started the morning at 7:00 AM, they finished the day after 8 PM.


We made an appointment with the computer genius in Dallas who told us that the computer's brain was broken. Repairs are being made. It should be up and running by Christmas morning.

When things go wrong, and they will, here is a plan of action. One, take a deep breath and don't let the chaos of that moment invade your soul, keep on worshipping. If you don't know the words, hum along with the tune. If you can't hum, smile. Two, relax your neck muscles and instead of swiveling backwards, tilt your head down and say a prayer for the people in the tech booth. It's a high wire, high stress place to serve. If something is not working, they are struggling to get it corrected. Pray for their spirits to have peace. Pray for their minds to have wisdom to know what to do. Three, tell the team thanks on Sundays when stuff goes mostly right. Don't wait till it's perfect. Encourage, encourage, encourage.



# WORSHIP GOD WITH US!

The service online, Facebook, Vimeo, and YouTube. Join us for church from wherever you are!

 FBC Athens

**#LOVINGTHEWORLDONLINE**

JOIN US **LIVE** EVERY SUNDAY  
8:30 AM • 10:45 AM • 11:00 AM (BILINGUAL)

**ONLINE**

## Members' Birthdays

**Sun, December 18** – Frances Cotten  
**Mon, December 19** – Mason Womble  
**Tues, December 20** – Robert Walker  
**Wed, December 21** – Jim Nolen  
**Thurs, December 22** – Bliss Nelson  
**Fri, December 23** – Susan Williams, Danielle Quade, Robin Newton  
**Sat, December 24** – Kara McClure, Jason Echols, David DeWitt

## Prayer Requests (church attendees & families) Please call with updates.

Our sympathy to: Anna Fay Wicker in the loss of her son, Philip Mark Perry Holcomb in the loss of his wife, Charlene

- Ann Dewees...fractured tibia/Advance Rehab & Health Care, Athens
- Viola Palmer...shoulder surgery 12-13/Baylor Scott & White
- Barbara Hearn's great nephew, Blaise Shumate...problems in swallowing, X- rays
- Miriam Inestroza's mother, Luce Torres...surgery/home
- Byron Bierhalter...heart stent 12-6/Christus Mother Frances, Tyler
- Bob Fergeson...Lumbar Nerve Ablation 12-8/UT Health, Athens
- Liz Sharp...knee replacement 12-14/Spine & Joint, Tyler
- Bruce Andrews...diabetes problems, vein procedure pending/home
- *Hospice Care: Roger Littleton's sister, Elizabeth Boynton, Sue Baldwin*
- *Cancer Diagnosed: Laura Pool; Karen and Bill Dye's daughter, Kellie; Trayona Skiles; Mary Boehler's niece, Denise Leach; Kellis & Betty White's son, Scott White; Kellis White; Jack & Paula Harris' son-in-law, Carlos Banuelos; Victry Roberts' sister -in-law, Mary Thane; Liz Sharp's brother, Terry Hodges; BJ Davies; Bob & Tonya Foster's son, Jim; John Dorsett's brother, Wesley; Rick Williams; Anthony Chiles*
- *In Rehab or Recuperating: Win James; Bill Dye; Amy Wood; Doris Raney's cousin, Rick Hall; Marylyn Wright; Barbara Hearn's granddaughter, Sarah Schwartz; Perry Holcomb; Jeany Teague's sister in law, Lena Gipson; Beverly Moore; Drew Douglas's mom, Pam Douglas; Jerry Becton; Sandy Boister; Nancy Glass; Betty White; Nikki DuBose's dad, Don Kissinger; Gracie & Carlos Murillo's son, Max; Mamie Stafford's daughter Stephanie; Antonia Moreno's mom, Antonia Herrera; Kathryn Overmoe; Tony Sharp; Shirley Bailey's sister, Charlott Hutson; Lee & Susan Bush; David Yarbrough; Katherine Hellwig; Marylyn Wright's sister, Jeanne Gage; Anne Stark; Laura Pool's brother, Aaron Bickley's wife, Brenda; Ray & Connie Hicks' son, Tracy Hicks; Hattie Graham's daughter, Vicky Dominque*

## Bible Reading Plan, SEEDTIME & HARVEST, Self Control

Day of Week	Date	Day	Luke	Psalm AM	Psalm PM
Sunday	12-18-2022	92	24:1-12	119.89-120	119.121-144
Monday	12-19-2022	93	24:13-35	119.145+	120-121
Tuesday	12-20-2022	94	24:36-49	122-123	124-125
Wednesday	12-21-2022	95	1:5-25	126-127	128-129
Thursday	12-22-2022	96	1:26-38	130-131	132
Friday	12-23-2022	97	1:39-45	133-134	135
Saturday	12-24-2022	98	1:46-56	136	137-138
Sunday	12-25-2022	99	1:57-66	Luke 1:67-79	Luke 2:29-32